

NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino **Josie Gonzales Fifth District**

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**JGFDS-PR-208 FUNDS TO BUY BOOKS, SUPPORT LOCAL PROGRAM & EVENT
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
BOB PAGE AT (909) 387-4565**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FUNDS WILL BUY BOOKS, SUPPORT PASTOR PROGRAM AND A LOCAL EVENT

SAN BERNARDINO – Children from Fontana and neighboring communities are reading so much that the new Martin Luther King Jr. Children's section in the recently opened Lewis Library and Technology Center can barely keep up with the demand.

To keep the children reading, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors today approved Supervisor Josie Gonzales' allocation of \$100,000 to purchase more books, educational DVDs and CDs, and other educational materials for the busy wing.

"The public's response to the new library exceeded everyone's expectations," said Supervisor Gonzales. "However the children are the ones who really touch my heart. Who said, 'Children don't read?'"

"If we instill in them the love for reading when they are very young, they will enter kindergarten ready to learn; they will grow to be higher achieving students and go on to be productive members of our communities," said Supervisor Gonzales. "It all starts with that first book."

In addition to the library funds, the Board also approved Supervisor Gonzales' items, which will give \$1,000 to the Pastors on the Premise Benefit Program and \$2,000 that enabled the Vietnam Memorial Moving Wall to visit the City of Fontana.

Pastors on the Premises Benefit Program

Inland Empire Concerned African-American Churches, a local non-profit, initiated its Pastors on the Premise Benefit Program to give low achieving students hope that they can succeed academically and turn their lives around. The pilot program, started at Arroyo Valley High School in San Bernardino, has been so successful and the Pastors plan to expand the program to other county high schools.

"We appreciate Supervisor Gonzales' financial and moral support of our Benefits Program," said Dr. Craig Luke, pastor of C.S. Luke Ministries of San Bernardino. "These funds will enable us to reach out to more students."

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The program targets students with grade point averages of 1.9 or lower and a high absentee rate. They must attend their classes daily, check in with the Pastor or school Administrator and raise their GPA to a 2.0 or higher within a 10-week period to receive their chosen incentive, which may be a bicycle, boom box or tickets to Six Flags.

“The program is literally transforming young people’s lives. Students, seemingly destined to dropout, are building their trust in themselves and adults and learning to be accountable, responsible young men and women,” said Dr. Luke.

He added that one student’s GPA increased from 1.2 to 3.5, and another student – a former gang member – who participated in the program is now making A’s and B’s and aspiring to go to college.

“This program proves how we as adults, with a handshake and an opportunity, can change the outcome of a precious life,” said Supervisor Gonzales.

“I applaud the IECAAC for sponsoring this program and the pastors who give their time walking our school yards. It is my honor to help them help our youth,” she added.

Vietnam Memorial Moving Wall

Board of Supervisor Chairman Paul Biane and Supervisor Gonzales partnered with the American Legion Steel-Towne Post 772 to bring the Vietnam Memorial Moving Wall to the City of Fontana, May 1-5.

The Moving Wall is a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. More than 50,000 names of U.S. military personnel who died in the war are etched on the memorial.

"I am very proud that the County was able to partner with the American Legion in bringing this moving tribute to our region," said Supervisor Gonzales. "For many of our residents, seeing the Moving Wall replica allowed them a glimpse at a part of our American history, and the opportunity to honor those who gave their lives. Freedom is not free."

“I applaud the American Legion Steele-Towne Post for bringing the Vietnam Memorial Moving Wall to the City of Fontana and the County of San Bernardino,” said Chairman Biane, who serves as the County’s Second District Supervisor. “The Vietnam Memorial Wall is an overwhelming reminder of all those who made the ultimate sacrifice for this country during the war, and it was an honor to have it in our County again.”

The City of Fontana visit was the fifth time the Moving Wall has been in San Bernardino County in the more than 20 years it’s toured the country.

The 5th District includes the unincorporated areas of Bloomington, Muscoy and Arrowhead Farms, the city of Rialto, major portions of the cities of Colton and San Bernardino, and a segment of the city of Fontana.